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NDA's 3rd term crucial for India's progress, says PM

Opposition parties are incapable of taking the country forward: Modi

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said a third term for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is essential for India's progress because the opposition parties lack the vision and commitment to take the country forward in terms of development.

Addressing BJP delegates from across the country at the BJP's national convention, Modi said he is not seeking another term to enjoy power but for the country's benefit. As-asserting that the ruling alliance will storm back to power with a record mandate of 400-plus seats, he said even world leaders are convinced about his continuance as PM that he is getting invitations for events that are months away. "The elections are yet to happen, but I am getting invitations from foreign countries for July, August, September... These countries know that *Aayega to Modi* (Modi's victory is inevitable)," he said, adding that every country now wants to have deeper relations with India.

In his 70-minute address to party's delegates, Modi urged them to work hard and reach out to each and every beneficiary of Central government schemes. "For NDA to cross 400, the BJP will have to cross the milestone of 370. The next five years are going to be crucial. We have to take a big leap towards Viksit Bharat. The first imperative is to ensure the return of the BJP to power in strong numbers," he said.

Taking a jab at the opposition



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the BJP National Council meeting on its second day at Bharat Mandapam | PM

The next five years are going to be crucial. The first condition for realising the big goals for the country is to ensure the return of the BJP to power with a strong mandate

Narendra Modi, PM

parties, Modi said they may not know how to plan or execute large projects but they are matchless in making false commitments. "Despite this, these parties lack the courage to make one promise—Viksit Bharat. Nor do they question us about it. They have acknowledged they cannot lead India to development," he said.

Modi claimed the BJP is the only party that aspires to make India a developed nation by 2047, adding that NDA's last 10 years have been characterised by bold decisions and futuristic policies. "We dared to complete the tasks were left unfinished for decades—Ayodhya Ram temple construction, opening of Kartarpur corridor, abrogation of Article 370," he said. P9

It's Mahabharata war, says Shah



Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday likened the Lok Sabha polls to the Mahabharata war, asserting that the BJP will win. "Just as in the Mahabharata war there were two camps, Kauravas and Pandavas, today there are two camps ahead of polls," he said

Ram Rajya for 1,000 years: BJP resolution

The BJP's national convention passed a resolution on the Ram temple in Ayodhya, stating it heralds establishment of 'Ram Rajya' in India for the next 1,000 years. The resolution noted the temple has become a temple of "national consciousness"

Nadda's tenure extended till June



BJP national president JP Nadda's tenure has been extended till June 2024. The decision, which was announced in January by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, was approved by the party's national council held in New Delhi on Sunday

RECORD PLAYERS: INDIA POST 434-RUN WIN

60MESH S @Rajkot

RAVINDRA Jadeja was down on his knees, kissing the pitch at the Niranjan Shah Stadium, Rajkot. He had completed a fiftieth, trapping Mark Wood on the pads and helped India secure a record victory in the third Test against England here on Sunday. At least he thought so.

Wood reviewed and survived, but it was always going to be a matter of time. He dismissed Wood in the next over, this time the celebrations were much casual despite India registering a 434-run victory—the biggest in terms of margin of runs—taking a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. Rohit was a satisfied captain.



India's Ravindra Jadeja (L) celebrates the wicket of England's Joe Root on Day 4 in Rajkot, on Sunday. This is India's biggest win (in terms of margin of runs) | AP

After being constantly challenged by England, in Rajkot, he and the bowlers had come up with specific plans for a slowish surface and it worked. Mohammed Siraj led the way in the first essay and

Jadeja in the second. R Ashwin, who had to head home for a family emergency, too, joined the team on Sunday. This one, along with Visakhapatnam, will remain special for Rohit because of where they were

after Hyderabad and the players they did not have. For England, the Rajkot Test was supposed to be their best chance. The hosts were playing with two debutants and a middle-order with a cumulative experience of one Test. England had India down to 33/3 on day one. England were 207/2 after day two. When they started batting on Saturday, they did not have to face Ashwin.

And yet, over the course of 48 hours, India did what they do more often than not in a home Test. They bundled out England, piled on a massive lead before putting England back with four-and-a-half sessions to play. The rest, as said before, was all Jadeja's magic. P13

Three charred to death, five injured after scrapyard goes up in flames in city



A gutted autorickshaw parked near the scrapyard where a fire broke out at Ramasandra in Bengaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a major accident, three died, while five other workers were critically injured after a major fire broke out at a scrapyard where the workers were allegedly filling chemicals into perfume bottles. The incident happened in Kumbalagodu on the outskirts of the city on Sunday. The cause of the accident is yet to be ascertained. One of the deceased has been identified as Saleem, aged around 30, who was running the place, while the identity of two others is yet to be established. The injured are Afroz, Sadik, Allah Bakhsh, Riyaz and Imran. Of the five, the condition of four is said to be critical, and they are being treated at Victoria Hospital.

The accident occurred around 5 pm when eight workers were reportedly infusing chemicals into perfume bottles at a 30x40 sqft scrapyard on Chikkabasti Main Road at Ramasandra near Kumbalagodu. P5

EXPRESS READ

BC hostels in Tumakuru faced rice shortage

Tumakuru: Backward Class hostels in Tumakuru faced rice shortages in December last year forcing officials to get 180 quintals of rice from the Siddaganga Mutt. The district was supposed to get rice from the Food and Civil Supplies Department in October 2023, but got it in January 2024 | P4

Kerala cops nab K'taka Naxal after 20 years

Chikkamagaluru: Naxalite Suresh Angadi alias Pradeep, who was evading the police for more than 20 years, was arrested by the Kannur police in Kerala. The Karnataka police had announced a reward of Rs 5 lakh | P7

Farmers harden stance as talks drag on, want protest at BJP leaders' doorsteps

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

FARMER unions on Sunday hardened their stance even as the fourth round of talks with the Centre kicked off in Chandigarh, with the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of unions, calling for taking the protest to BJP leaders' doorsteps.

In Punjab, protesting farmers will gherao the residences of BJP leaders for three days starting Tuesday. Also, tolls across the state will be 'liberated' to allow free passage of vehicles.

Farmer leaders warned the protest will continue even if the model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha elections comes into force, reiterating that the farmers will not accept anything less than the C2 (comprehensive cost of production)



Farmers raising slogans at the Punjab-Haryana Shambhu border on Sunday during their 'Delhi Chalo' protest near Patiala district | PM

plus 50% formula for minimum support price as recommended in the Swaminathan Commission report.

The SKM announced its decision after its meeting in Ludhiana on Sunday. SKM leader Balbir Singh Rajwal said farmers will stage protests in front of the residences of Punjab BJP leaders including MPs and MLAs from Tuesday to Thursday. Toll barriers will also be deactivated during February

20-22 to make passage free for passengers, he added.

Rajwal said SKM will hold a meeting on February 22 in Delhi to chalk out future strategy.

Meanwhile, Haryana farmers unions have also got active after a meeting with khap at Kurukshetra on Sunday. Haryana BKU (Chaduni) president Gurnam Singh Chaduni said they will announce their plan of action on Monday if the fourth round of talks fail. P10

India's biggest leopard safari to open soon at BBP

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

THE much-awaited dedicated leopard safari will soon start at Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP), the first in Karnataka and the biggest in India.

Even as Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Thursday directed the forest department and zoo management officials to start the leopard

safari soon, on the lines of the already-existing BBP's lion and tiger safaris, BBP officials said it depends on the time the leopards in the safari take to bond with each other and how fast they get trained. "If all goes well, the safari can be thrown open for people in one-and-a-half months. But if the model code of conduct (MCC) comes into force (for the Lok Sabha polls

scheduled in April-May), then it will be open to people in May or after the MCC is lifted," said an official from the department.

Training is necessary as officials are wary of the leopards not co-existing with each other, which was the case with the cheetahs brought from South Africa to the Kuno reserve in Madhya Pradesh.

BBP has carved out 20 hectares in its area for the safari. The management has set up a high-rise mesh and kept tall trees away from the fences, not wanting to give any room for the big cats to escape.

Leopard safaris, managed by zoo authorities, are already open in Nagpur in Maharashtra and Rajgir in Bihar, but the one at BBP is planned to be bigger than them. P7

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